

**Synod Council Meeting**

December 16, 2023, at Providence, Holland

**Attending:** Bishop Daniel Beaudoin, Vice President Nancy Yunker, Secretary Michelle Schaffer, Treasurer Shea McGrew, Wendy Bauer, Caitlin Brink, Cindy Harris, Kathy Jurrus, Rev. Robin Owen, Rev Brenda Peconge, Rev. Ashley Rosa-Ruggieri, Kevin Swagler, Jerusha Walker, Clark Price, and Deacon Rodney West-Estell

**Synod Staff:** Jacob Henry, Rev. Sarah Schaaf, Calla Gilson

**Absent:** Rev. Melanie Haack, Rev. Steve Ramsey, Jillian Russell, Kelly Hancock-Weber, Linda Henschen

**Guest:** Chaplain Ann Augustin and Rev. Merlin Jacobs

**1. Welcome and Devotion**

Pastor Todd Milner led devotions and shared the story about Providence in Holland.

**2. Approval of Minutes**

- September 2023 Synod Council Minutes  
Synod Council Minutes September 16,2023 and  
September 21-23,2023, Meeting Minutes (electronic meeting):  
Motion to approve by Caitlin Brink and seconded by Kevin Swagler  
**Approved as written.**
- Review of October 16-19 Executive Committee Decisions
- Review of November 30-December 2 Executive Committee Decisions

**3. Bishop's Update and Teaching Time**

a. 2024: Year of Sabbath

- Memory verse is from Hebrews 4:9; "There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God;"

b. Gift

- Received a gift from First St. John Lutheran Church in Toledo of \$25,000.00 from a bequest they received.
  1. Tithe 10%, \$2,500.00 to the ELCA Churchwide
  2. 40%, \$10,000.00 to our Year End Ask, "Imagining Renewal Microgrants."
  3. 50%, \$12,500.00 to our Operating Fund

c. First English Lutheran Church, Wapakoneta

- On December 10, 2023, took the first steps to stepping away from the ELCA. March 10 is scheduled for the second vote. Looking to join the NALC.

d. Retiring Pastors

- Thank you to Pastor Doris Mars of St. Johns Findlay and Pastor Katie Suggitt of Grace, Castalia

- e. Closing
  - First English, Bryan will close December 31, 2023
- f. Ordination
  - Melanie Forrey at Zoar, Perrysburg on December 6<sup>th</sup>.
- g. Pastor Sarah shared.
  - On the Way. How are we equipping people in our congregations? What do we do with people that need more?
  - Diakonia, Dreams. NE Ohio Synod to join NW Ohio Synod.
    - i. Second ring of learning, in-person retreats

#### 4. Synod Council Roster Actions

- **Action SC23.22 Approval of Synod Council Calls**  
“At the recommendation of the Bishop, Synod Council approves the extension of a Synod Council call to Deacon Ann Augustin to serve as a chaplain at ProMedica Hospital System in Toledo and to Rev. Mary Ann Siefke to serve as the Director of Congregational Engagement and Advancement at Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capitol University.”  
Cindy Harris moved and Kathy Jurrus second to approve. **Motion approved.**
- **Action SC23.23 Approval of Retirement**  
“At the recommendation of the Bishop, Synod Council approves the retirement status of Rev. Steve Bauerle, Rev. Dennis Wansitler, Rev. Kathleen Shuck and Rev. Craig Lewis.”  
Rev. Brenda Peconge moved and Wendy Bauer second the motion. **Motion approved.**
- **Action SC23.24 Appointment of Synod Authorized Ministers (SAM)**  
“At the recommendation of the Bishop, Synod Council approves the appointment of the following Synod Authorized Ministers to serve through December 31, 2024:  
Deacon Amanda Carpenter at Bethlehem and St. Mark’s, Defiance  
Deacon Jean Wise at Williams County Parish  
Bob Fett at St. Luke’s, North Baltimore & St. John, McComb  
Tom Fleming at St. Mark, Ada  
Alan Fuhrhop at St. Stephen, Hamler, Florida United Methodist Church, Napoleon, and Independence United Methodist Church, Defiance (TEEM Candidate)  
Jeannine Grimm at Calvary, Northwood, Christ, Dowling & Sunday supply  
Alex Heffelfinger at St. John, Hicksville  
Shea McGrew at Hope, Bowling Green  
Deb Noll at St. Paul, Jenera (interim)  
Maureen Pump at Grace and St. Mark, Fremont (interim)  
Frank Raeske at Zion, Luckey  
Clione Schneider at Calvary, Northwood & Christ, Dowling  
Greg Silliman at St. James, Toledo

Chris Staup at First, Stryker

Frank Weaver at Faith United, Toledo

Clark Price moved and Rev. Ashley Rosa-Ruggieri second to approve the motion. **Motion approved.**

- **Action SC23.25 Appointment of Co-Dean**

“At the recommendation of the Bishop, Synod Council approves the appointment of Pastor Beth Ferne-Johnson to serve as the co-dean of the Toledo Conference.”

Kevin Swagler moved, and Kathy Jurrus seconded to approve the motion.

**Motion approved.**

- **Action SC23.26 Appointment of Nominating Committee Members**

“Synod Council approves the appointment of Alan Fuhrhop Maumee Valley Conference Lay Member (2023-2026) and Jarrod Schaaf At Large Member (2022-2025) to serve on the Nominating Committee.”

Rev. Robin Owen moved and Deacon Rodney West-Estell second to approve the motion. **Motion approved.**

## **5. Vice-President Report**

- Nancy Yunker shared that the churchwide Vice-Presidents meet monthly via Zoom and share what a VP does.
- Connections, meet with the Bishop monthly, quarterly meetings, Executive Meetings, VP meeting-strengthen congregations, (VP meeting in Chicago in March)
- Draw to sending- go out, small groups, staying connected.

## **6. Director for Community Engagement Report-Pastor Sarah Schaaf**

- Diakonia Program is growing.
- Maumee Conference,” How do we network with youth?”
  - Dean Team Leaders and Middle schoolers attend “Service Camp”
- Churchwide Strategic Ministry Grants and SAWC Grants were reduced by 10% for 2024 across all synods in the ELCA. This impacts the following ministries:
  - Salem Lutheran Church, Toledo-2023- \$14,000 to 2024 \$12,600
  - Redeemer Lutheran Church, Toledo- 2023 \$14,000 to 2024 \$12,600
  - Camino de Vida, Fremont-2023-\$10,000 to 2024 \$9,000

Total reduction of \$3800. Pastor Sarah has been in conversation with these ministry’s leadership. Please pray about how we might support these important ministries.

## **7. Financial Report, First Reading of the 2024-25 Mission Spending**

- First reading of the proposed revised spending plan. Action will be taken at the January 2024 meeting.
- Jacob Henry and Shea McGrew highlighted and explained current activity.

**8. Year End Ask, “Imagining Renewal Microgrants” Update- Calla Gilson**

- 2020-2022 \$140,000.00 has been given to new outreach across the synod.
- 2023 so far \$37,000.00 has been collected.

**9. Administration updates**

**Action SC23-27 Constitution Updates**

“Synod Council approves the constitutional updates for St John, Port Clinton, Salem, Toledo, Good Hope, Bucyrus and First, Upper Sandusky.

Clark Price moved, and Wendy Bauer seconded the motion to approve. **Motion approved.**

**10. Action SC23.28 Renewal of SAWC Authorization**

“Synod Council renews the authorization of the following Synodically Authorized Worshipping Communities until December 31, 2024: Sonfire by the River in Pemberville, and Camino de Vida in Fremont.”

Rev. Robin Owen moved, and Jerusha Walker seconded the motion to approve.

**Motion approved.**

**11. Action SC23.29 Update to Account Signatories**

“Synod Council authorizes the following individuals as signatories for the Old Fort Bank accounts: Bishop Daniel Beaudoin, Treasurer Shea McGrew, Deacon Sherry Krieger, Pastor Sarah Schaaf, and Diane Stultz. Synod Council authorizes the following individuals as signatories for all investments accounts held by Mass Mutual and Citizen’s Bank: Bishop Daniel Beaudoin, Treasurer Shea McGrew and Linda Henschen.”

Cindy Harris moved, and Kevin Swagler seconded the motion to approve. **Motion approved.**

**12. Sending Blessing**

**Future Meeting:**

**April 13, 2024 (note date change)**  
**June 1, 2024—Synod Assembly**  
**September 21, 2024**  
**December 14, 2024**

**Zion, Sandusky**  
**St. Mark, Bowling Green**  
**St. Paul, 1619 St. Anthony, Coldwater**  
**Trinity Wauseon**